

12-02-04 It's time to stroll.

Amazingly, it is already December in what has certainly been the quickest year of my life. And the first week in December can only mean one thing in the City of Troy. Ok, maybe two if you count prayers for no snow.

That's right, this weekend is the 22nd Annual Victorian Stroll in historic Downtown Troy. Earlier this week, we had an exciting kickoff at the Pioneer Savings Bank on Second Street, where the Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce unveiled the official poster of the Stroll, the Stamp from the Troy Post Office, and the list of events for the Stroll '04, complete with music from Holiday Voices. All the participants were dressed in their Victorian getups, and it was an exciting evening.

I'm excited to make an announcement from the City's end of things pertaining to the Stroll. For the first time in a long time, the City of Troy is sponsoring fireworks following the events on Sunday night at 5:30. The fireworks will be shot off from Prospect Park, and should be visible from many areas in the downtown region and other parts of the City.

I cannot stress enough how important this event is for the City of Troy and its merchants downtown. Not only is this event the unofficial kickoff to our holiday shopping season, but it is also the major opportunity we have to showcase Troy to the thousands of people that will make their way downtown on Sunday. And unlike last year, I do not believe there will be two feet of freshly dumped snow on the streets.

When organizers say there will be something for the whole family, they are not kidding. From music in various buildings downtown, to shopping and restaurants, to the reindeer near City Hall, and the lighting of the Holiday Tree, everyone will be able to enjoy themselves in some fashion this weekend.

If you're in the need for a laugh, I have volunteered to dress up in some interesting Victorian Garb. I had the opportunity to dress up on Tuesday for the kickoff, and I can't even describe what I looked like. It's worth the trip downtown alone. I will also be reading "Twas the Night Before Christmas," at the Troy Public Library (3 p.m.) and the McCarthy Building (next to City Hall at 4:30 p.m.) Stop by and say hello.

Finally, I would like to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to attend the Rensselaer County Historical Society and the 48th Annual Holiday Greens Show. I had the wonderful opportunity to attend the preview show on Wednesday night. I do not want to spoil any surprises, but suffice it to say this is a show that must not be missed.

Have a wonderful weekend, make sure you stop down to the Stroll on Sunday, and don't forget to stay light for the fireworks.

Harry J Tutunjian
Mayor of Troy